

# Course structure

## Core modules

- [The Museum and Change](#)
- [Designing for Creative Lives](#)
- [Objects and Collections: Care, Management and Curation](#)
- [Engaging Audiences](#)

## Option modules

Choose **four option modules** from:

- [Lifelong Learning](#)
- [Museums and the Natural Environment](#)
- [Heritage](#)
- [Digital](#)
- [Museums and Contemporary Issues](#)
- [Practice](#)

Plus your [Research](#) project (For MA/MSc degree's applicants)

If your Research project concerns a science collection or museum, or if the nature of your investigation is 'scientific', you can receive a Master of Science (MSc) degree instead of a Master of Arts (MA) degree.

**Modules shown represent choices available to current students. The range of modules available and the content of any individual module may change in future years.**

# The Museum and Change

**Module code:** MU7550

This module sets the context for the course by establishing some of the key trajectories of thought around museums and galleries. You'll begin by examining definitions of the museum, how these have changed, and then focus on the question of who museums are for. You'll also consider how museums both shape and are shaped by their communities, and the wider social and cultural landscapes in which they are situated.

Exploring and assessing how wider agendas, policy and current museology are impacting on these institutions will be central to the module. A core theme will be to investigate the place of the museum in society by looking at its history, and changing ideas about museums as sites of knowledge and education. This will also involve considering the contemporary debates that animate current museum discourse and practice, such as decolonising practice, museum ethics and the postdigital museum.

## Topics covered

- Museum histories and the social role of the museum
- Museums and 'decolonisation'
- The educational role of the museum
- Museums in social and cultural landscapes
- The 'postdigital' museum
- Museum ethics

## Learning

- 50 hours of lectures
- 2 hours of seminars
- 2 hours of tutorials
- 8 hours of fieldwork
- 88 hours of guided independent study

## Assessment

- Essay, 2,500 words (100%)

# Designing for Creative Lives

**Module code:** MU7551

This module argues that museums have real social effects. During this module you'll focus on the role of museums and art institutions in enriching lives by actively engaging with contemporary social issues and stimulating participation and dialogue with and amongst diverse audiences. It will enable you to understand how the special conditions of spaces of culture and the social exchanges that happen within them open up possibilities for engagement with difficult, political and contentious topics.

You'll consider the emergence of 'activist practice', exploring how museums can creatively and critically engage with contemporary social, political and environmental concerns. This will also involve how audiences can be engaged through the design of diverse, stimulating, provocative and accessible museum experiences, and how the values and politics of cultural organisations can be manifested physically in the visitor experience.

## Topics covered

- Museums, human rights and social justice
- Activist practice
- Missions, visions and values
- Ethical interpretation
- Designing museum spaces for social engagement
- Marketing the museum and audience development

## Learning

- 50 hours of lectures
- 2 hours of seminars
- 2 hours of tutorials
- 8 hours of fieldwork
- 88 hours of guided independent study

## Assessment

- Presentation (100%)

# Objects and Collections: Care, Management and Curation

**Module code:** MU7552

This module looks at objects and collections from a range of perspectives. The module will challenge you to think critically about the lives, contexts and values of objects, and the different ways in which we encounter and experience them. You'll begin with a critical examination of objects – their lives, contexts and the different ways in which we encounter and experience them.

You'll then move onto examine the ways in which objects, collections and collecting have been influence by changing ideas and approaches. This will develop your critical understanding of the principles and practice of collections management and care including how to handle, pack, and label objects, as well as preventative conservation and collections development. You'll also explore issues around culturally sensitive practice including ownership, rights, restitution and repatriation.

## Topics covered

- Objects and collections
- Engaging with and experiencing objects
- Culturally sensitive practice
- Collections management
- Collections care

## Learning

- 50 hours of lectures
- 2 hours of seminars
- 2 hours of tutorials
- 8 hours of fieldwork
- 88 hours of guided independent study

## Assessment

- Essay, 2,500 words (100%)

# Engaging Audiences

**Module code:** MU7553

This module puts audiences at the centre of the exhibition process. You'll consider the museum as a site of representation, communication and meaning-making, while assessing a range of interpretive media and their role in audience engagement. The module will give you an understanding of theories of learning, media and design and their importance in museum communication. You'll also explore participatory approaches to exhibition making.

This module offers you a chance to put your ideas, experiences and theoretical tools into practice, through the development of a portfolio and an exhibition proposal. Areas covered by the module include: designing and planning an exhibition, analysing the exhibition space and issues of representation, creating a design brief, choosing interpretive media and planning events and an education programme.

## Topics covered

- Audience engagement
- Participatory approaches
- Issues of representation in exhibitions
- Learning, media, digital design in exhibitions
- Museum communication
- Exhibition types and strategies

## Learning

- 50 hours of lectures
- 2 hours of seminars
- 2 hours of tutorials
- 8 hours of fieldwork
- 88 hours of guided independent study

## Assessment

- Portfolio, 2,500 words (100%)

# Lifelong Learning

**Module code:** MU7554

This module considers how the museum can offer opportunities for learning across the lifecourse. You'll consider matters relating to the school curricula, developing and evaluating learning programmes and resources for all ages (from under 5's to older adults), new directions in participatory pedagogy and community engagement, and the developing museums programmes for health and wellbeing. It is suitable for anyone interested in the dynamic and evolving work of educators, outreach and community engagement workers in museums.

## Learning

- 50 hours of lectures
- 2 hours of tutorials
- 10 hours of fieldwork
- 88 hours of guided independent study

## Assessment

- Essay, 2,500 words (100%)

# Museums and the Natural Environment

**Module code:** MU7555

In this module you'll explore key issues such as climate change, biodiversity loss and environmental sustainability, while considering how museums are involved in terms of 'research' by contributing to our understanding of processes and their impact. You'll look at how they 'communicate' by helping to convey ideas and information, online and through exhibitions. As well as their 'activism', as they provide topics for discussion and debate, and lead by example through their own practices of environmental sustainability. This module is suitable for anyone interested in the museum's role in responding to environmental issues.

## Learning

- 50 hours of lectures
- 2 hours of tutorials
- 10 hours of fieldwork
- 88 hours of guided independent study

## Assessment

- Essay, 2,500 words (100%)

# Heritage

**Module code:** MU7556

Heritage is about how we understand, interpret and use the past in all its different forms. This module will cover a wide range of topics including contested and difficult histories, the notion of authenticity, intangible heritage, heritage policy and governance, democratising the heritage process, and the complex issues relating to community engagement and ownership of heritage. It is suitable for anyone curious about the use of heritage in identity formation and the role heritage plays in everyday life.

## Learning

- 50 hours of lectures
- 2 hours of tutorials
- 10 hours of fieldwork
- 88 hours of guided independent study

## Assessment

- Essay, 2,500 words (100%)

# Digital

**Module code:** MU7557

This module focuses on how to use the digital purposefully and creatively in museum contexts. It will consider topics such as new media management and production in the museum/gallery; the impact of digital on curatorial practice and visitor experience; the transformative potential of digital for museum learning; and the principles of creative design and evaluation of in-gallery and online digital media. It is suitable for anyone curious and enthusiastic for digital media. You do not need high levels of computer literacy and knowledge to take this module.

## Learning

- 50 hours of lectures
- 2 hours of tutorials
- 10 hours of fieldwork
- 88 hours of guided independent study

## Assessment

- Essay, 2,500 words (100%)

# Museums and Contemporary Issues

**Module code:** MU7558

In this module you'll delve deeper into aspects discussed in the core modules to examine how museums and galleries can engage with unfolding contemporary social issues. You'll consider how the museum can be a site for activism, social justice, human rights and social change, exploring cutting-edge examples of practice from across the globe. The module is suitable for anyone who wants to debate and advocate the socially purposeful role of museums.

## Learning

- 50 hours of lectures
- 2 hours of tutorials
- 10 hours of fieldwork
- 88 hours of guided independent study

## Assessment

- Essay, 2,500 words (100%)

# Practice

**Module code:** MU7559

This module is a 'practice' work-based module. It will provide you with a creative, structured, and well-supported opportunity to develop, undertake and critically reflect upon a project of your own choosing in a museum or gallery context you are familiar with, or your own place of work. It is suitable for anyone who wants to develop expertise in an area of their choosing through work-based learning.

## Learning

- 20 hours of lectures
- 4 hours of tutorials
- 86 hours of work based learning
- 40 hours of guided independent study

## Assessment

- Professional practice portfolio, 2,500 words (100%)
- Practice portfolio (0%)

# Research

**Module code:** MU7560

The dissertation provides an opportunity to carry out an extended piece of research into a subject or issue which has captured your imagination. Your project will be a robustly researched, clearly communicated, well-structured exploration of an agreed subject, prepared according to University regulations and established academic conventions of referencing and presentation.

This is a great opportunity to undertake original research and analysis in your work. It can draw on a variety of sources, including current museum studies literature, primary sources, practical experiments, collection visits, interviews and observation. Consideration of the relationship of museum or gallery studies research to museum or gallery practice is a consistent feature of research projects within this field.

You will normally awarded a Master of Arts. However, if your topic is scientific in content or methodology, or concerns a science museum or collection, then a Master of Science may be awarded.

## Learning

- 2 hours of lectures
- 4 hours of project supervision
- 594 hours of guided independent study

## Assessment

- Research project proposal (0%)
- Research assignment, 8,000 words (100%)